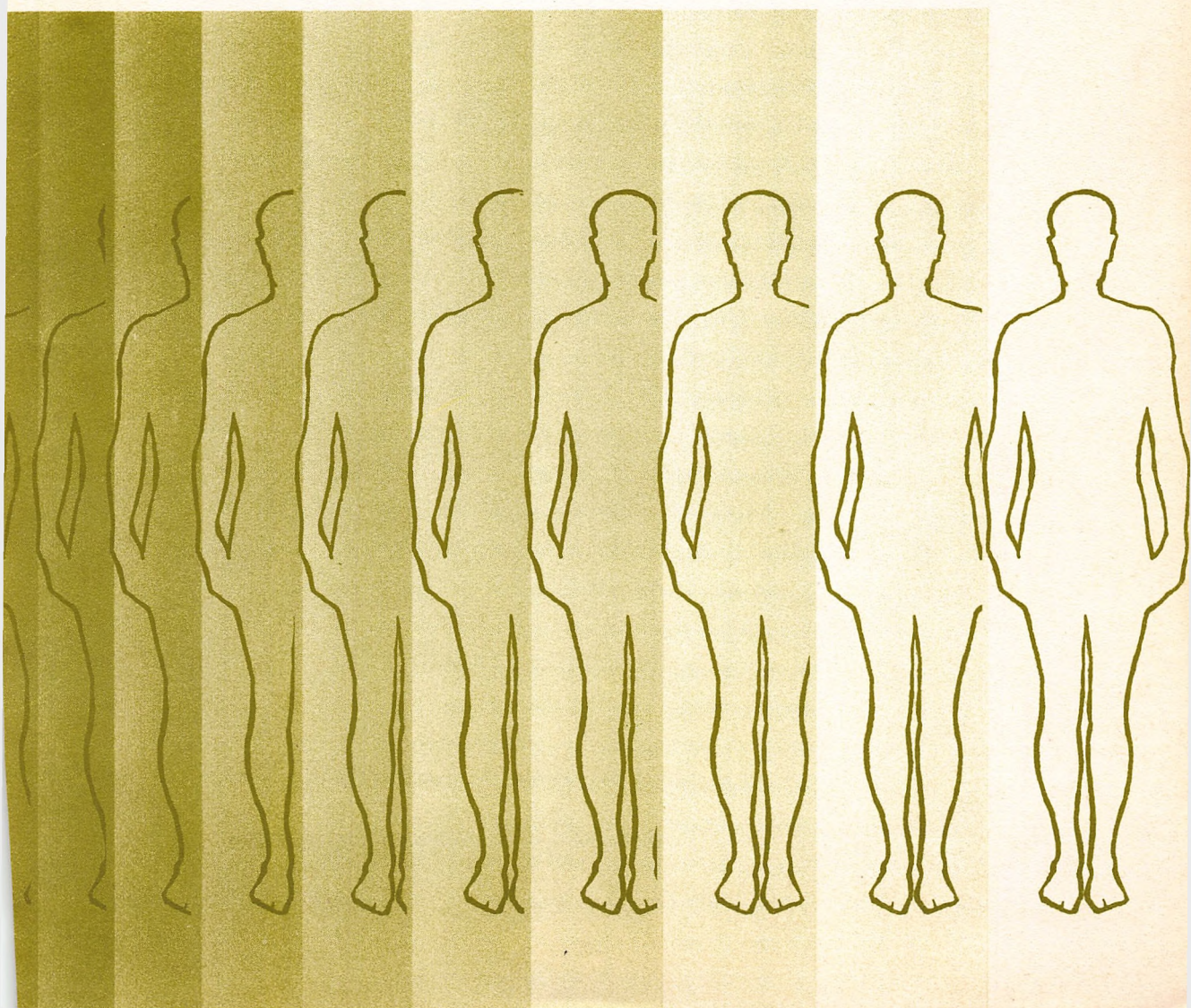


# TEN STEPS TO SELF- FULFILLMENT

By Robert G. Chaney

## STEP 4

Know Your Relation to the Infinite





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# TEN STEPS TO SELF-FULFILLMENT

By Robert G. Chaney

## STEP 4

### THE FOURTH VITAL IDEA:

## Know Your Relation to the Infinite

What is true greatness of spirit? Of one thing we can be certain: It is not coincident with academic honors, political office, scientific achievement, military victories, social position or amount of bank balance.

*True greatness of spirit is in fulfillment of the Self.*

Fulfillment of the Self is never complete until the conscious mind understands its nature (Step 1), its potentials (Step 2), its mission (Step 3)...and the powerful, mystical ingredient known by various names but commonly referred to in many languages as God. The Self must know its Source.

You will never know that Source until you discover what Gordon W. Allport expressed in his book, "The Individual and His Religion": *A man's religion is the audacious bid he makes to bind himself to creation and to the Creator. It is his ultimate attempt to enlarge and to complete his own personality by finding the supreme context in which he rightly belongs.*

Our goal in Step 4, then, is to find the supreme context in which you rightly belong. It is not nearly as important to learn the mysteries of infinite space as it is to know the Infinite in your own consciousness. But --

Is there really a God?

Some never believe. Some believe. Others know. Descartes, French philosopher and mathematician, said: *A non-entity cannot produce an entity*. With his reasoning we may say that since you are an entity it required an entity to produce you, and that entity must have been a greater one than you are, though not necessarily the same kind of entity that you are.

Many have taught that the greatest and most sublime thought man is capable of expressing is the concept of an Infinite Being with Whom or Which man is one. Certainly this was the central idea of Christ's teachings, and we can do no better than to strive to comprehend it and act upon it. It is the fourth Vital Idea that helps you fulfill your Self.

But how does one describe God? To be one with the Infinite one must define the Infinite. However, if you define the Infinite you create limits and the Infinite has no limits, for if It had It would not be infinite.

The Infinite has no limits but your understanding of the Infinite does have limits. So we will attempt to broaden our understanding as far as possible in order to understand as much of God as possible. And we begin with the unknown, ancient Hindu sage who attempted to describe a personified God in these words: "God is my father, God is my mother, God is my brother, God is my sister, God is my friend, God is my son, God is my daughter, God is my uncle, God is my aunt."

We might go on endlessly with this description through cousins, grandparents, animals, vegetable life and so on. What the sage wanted to say was that God is in everyone and everything, filling the comprehension of man and going far beyond the limits of his comprehension.

### WHERE WILL YOU FIND GOD?

But we are faced with a mystery. Let us accept it. There is a difference between what God is and what you or I say He is, for He is more than we, in our finite consciousness, can comprehend, now or ever. The sign of a limited consciousness is to insist that God is exactly what one person says He is. Soul-growth is evidenced by saying simply that *God is*. But if He is, where is He?

Haven't you heard someone say, "Once I was alone in the woods and suddenly I found God"? Or perhaps, "I was reading the Bible and suddenly I found God." Or, "I looked into the face of a child and saw God."

Did these people really go to a place, or a scripture, or a person to find the Infinite?

What they truly mean is, "As I was doing a certain thing, suddenly I became aware of God." And that awareness took place in their own consciousness. So they really found God in themselves, didn't they? God resides in the Self, and it is in the Self that you will find Him.

*I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.* These words of Jesus accomplish what many others have attempted and failed. They localize God without limiting Him. They provide a focal point through which God can function without denying the fact that He also functions through other focal points. They make Him imminent as well as transcendent, individually personal as well as available to everyone.

The best way to learn what God is, is to learn what you really are. We have been doing that, and will continue to do so, in this series of lessons. But if you are a projection of the Infinite, where is the line of separation between you and God? Personal mystical revelation will provide the answer.

### THE THREE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF MYSTICAL REVELATION

If you will practice mysticism, and experience the personal revelation of the Infinite it can provide, you can change the nature of your life. There are three basic principles to consider:

1. *You must have your own mystical experiences or revelations.*
2. *You must consciously pave the way for them to occur.*
3. *You must have an over-all realization that your Self is part of the Greater Self.*

This last principle is the most important, and as an example I will shortly describe an unusual experience of mine. But first let us briefly discuss these three aspects leading to the mystical revelation:

(1) One of the modern mystics whom I hold in great reverence is Rufus Jones, who said: *The Divine Person may best be approached through the human person.* But it is not any other human person. You can approach this mystic consciousness only through yourself. My mystic experiences will mean absolutely nothing to you. You must have your own.

(2) The idea that this inner experience must be induced is to suggest that it is only through deliberate directives on your part that the mystical light can be emphasized and externalized -- whether through wisdom or expression. And the expression can be twofold: either material objectives gained, or in a life dedicated to cosmic expression.

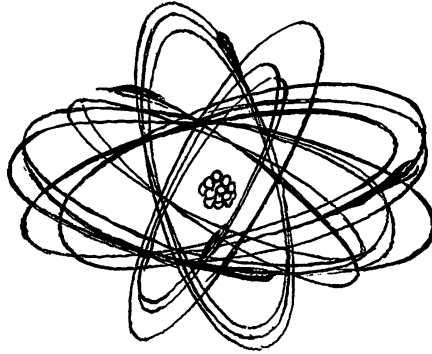
(3) To realize that your Self is a part of the Greater Self may, at first, seem like a statement of no profundity or personal meaning. But this third principle is of utmost importance in all types of mysticism...the fact that you are a part of the Infinite Being wherein we live and move and have our being.

When I was a boy, I remember wondering if perhaps man might not be a tiny atom in the body of some great giant. In a sense this was a youngster's statement of the mystical idea that we all are parts of One Great Whole, each expressed in a little different way, of course.

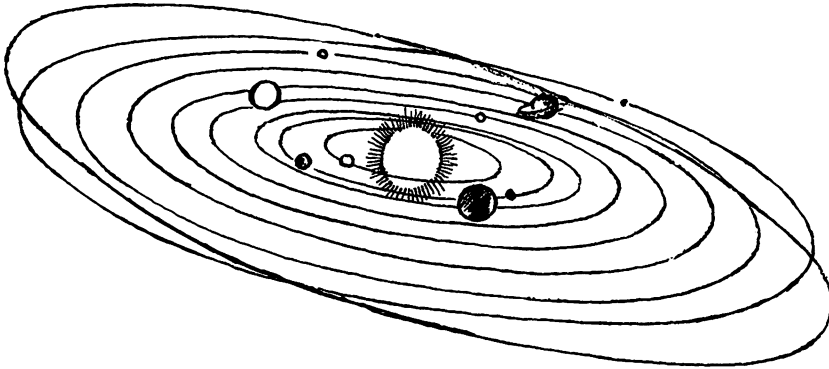
To further illustrate this idea let us suppose that someone might say: "But I can see, or cause, a distinct separateness between objects or between persons. In the skies I see one star or planet here, and another there. I can amputate an arm or leg and thus cause a separation of these members from my physical body." And this is true in a purely physical five-sense way. But --

Doctors and psychologists have argued pro and con regarding amputation and its effects upon the psyche. They know that even though arms or legs be removed, the person often maintains a feeling or sensation that this member of the body is still part of him. One faction says that this is because nerve ends continue to send messages to the brain. The other maintains this is but a psychological reaction. However, when these nerve ends are treated surgically or when psychological treatment is administered, the fact remains that the person continues to "feel" the amputated limb.

This relates again to the point that your Self is



*The orbit of each electron determines the properties of an atom.*



*The orbit of each planet around the sun affects the whole solar system.*



*The orbit of each star affects the entire galaxy.*

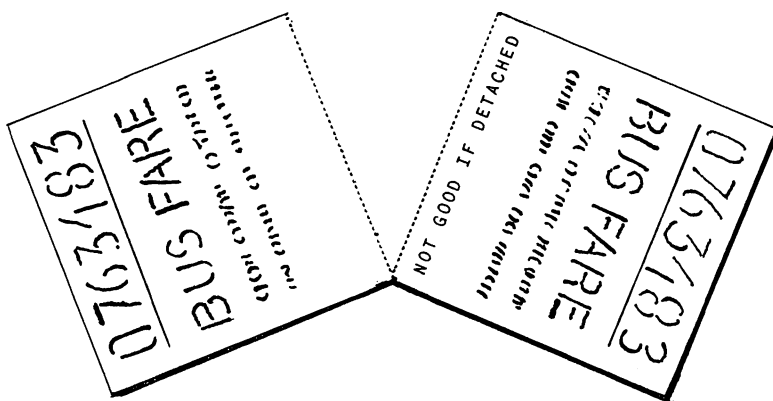
*Similarly the "orbit" of each individual human being within his sphere of influence in society has an effect on his city, state, nation and world at large.*

part of a Greater Self in which everything is a part of the whole, in a mystical sense.

It is impossible to designate boundaries. We cannot even separate your property from mine. You can step outside your door and scoop up a handful of earth. What do you have in your hand? A piece of your city, town or state? A piece of the United States? The planet? The solar system? The universe? Where does one begin and the other end? Cosmically it doesn't.

We can physically remove ourselves from persons, places, things and circumstances, but we cannot separate ourselves from them any more than we can separate our individualized selves from the "body" of the Greater or Infinite Being...regardless of what He is named or what our life expression might be. We are individualized but not separated.

Some 25 years ago I remember hearing a lecturer speak to a group of business men on the subject of community cooperation. He held aloft a bus ticket which was perforated through the center, half for the rider and half for the driver. Then he read the words in fine print along the perforation: "Not good if detached."



I've remembered it all these years, though in a different context than he presented it. We cannot fulfill the Self when we think and act as though we were detached from the Infinite. The separated Self is "not good if detached." It cannot grow any better than can the tree that isn't rooted in the soil which provides its life.

Let me tell you of the personal experience, which I mentioned earlier, that relates to this third principle. One night I couldn't sleep so I stepped out on the second story balcony of our house. A banana tree



grows alongside it. I observed this tree and thought to myself, "That banana tree is a living entity. I wonder if it thinks."

"Perhaps," I thought, "I can have a mystical experience with the tree and learn something about the unity of all life."

So I concentrated upon the banana tree with the most intense mental effort I could call forth. I tried to force my consciousness out from myself to merge with the tree in an attempt to sense the union that we, as living things, had between us...for, as we have discussed, mysticism embraces the concept that all life is one.

Suddenly a strange thing happened! I felt my consciousness merge with the banana tree! Suddenly I was the banana tree! Its consciousness and mine were the same. I was not Robert Chaney. I was simply that banana tree during a brief moment of attunement with it. My consciousness seemed dim and vague and not my own. I had a sense of frustration because the bananas were very small!

A psychiatrist might label this an hallucination... but I firmly believe it was a true mystic experience, and I further believe that you, in a very personal way, can sense your union with everything in this universe of ours and thereby realize the wholeness of ALL life and ALL existence.

Incidentally, this particular experience encompasses not only the third principle of aspiration to the mystic revelation, but the first and second...each must have his own experience...and it needs personal direction and inducement.

Are these ideas far removed from the mainstream of spiritual thinking and expression? Have I wandered away from the central theme of spiritual endeavor to a "never-never-land" of imagination and superstition? Let us see.

#### THE FIVE DISCOVERIES OF JESUS

Although many who have written in the Gospels about the life of Jesus have presented a complete picture of him, we must admit that it is a random, disorganized view. To the best of their ability they simply told what happened in his life, and made no attempt to

organize or summarize in order to give us a comprehensive and basic lesson from his life.

For many years, I have summarized a system through which, I believe, it is possible to gain at least partial knowledge of the Self's relation to the Infinite. By considering Jesus' life as a whole, rather than differentiated segments of it, we find five important points which I call "the five discoveries of Jesus."

1. God is imminent. He is not far away, but is resident in you now.
2. God is love. In the Cosmic Consciousness, which is an expression of God, is the capacity for ultimate love of all life, from mineral to human.
3. Man is a spiritual being. He is a projection of the Infinite who enters this differentiated octave of life as a self-conscious unit.
4. Divine Law has two aspects, material and spiritual. Though the two aspects are distinct, they interblend.
5. The Presence of God is realized through dynamic meditation. Conscious effort on your part as a spiritual being is the way to achieve oneness with the imminent, loving God and to blending the material and spiritual aspects of Divine Law.

Perhaps you would make a different list of basics. But if you accept these, you will see that indeed "The Divine Person may best be approached through the human person." *The way to know the Infinite is to know your Self. The way to find the Infinite is to find your Self. And the way to find your Self is to fulfill your Self.*

The ancient Sumerians, who were among the first to adopt a form of monotheism, or a concept of one God of many aspects, used the word *El* to designate the Infinite Being. The word means *the door*.

We look upon life through the doorway of our consciousness. The greater our ability to comprehend the Supreme One, the wider we open the door and the more of life we see and understand.

In the Hindu religion there is a concept known as *Ananta Chaitanya*. It means Infinite Consciousness. If your consciousness is an aspect of your Self, and your Self is an aspect of God, then you are capable of expressing Infinite Consciousness. Not every moment of every day, of course. But occasionally, in sublime moments of oneness, in moments of spiritual Self-fulfillment. To do this you must provide ways for the Infinite to reveal Himself to you in your conscious mind, or in some expression of your life. There are ways to stimulate this process.

#### HOW GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO YOU

There is a concept known as the *Divine Afflatus*. The word "afflatus" means inspiration or powerful impulse. The Divine Afflatus refers to the process by which God reveals Himself to man. In a moment of meditative reflection you may ask God what He is. But how do you receive the answer? How do you come to know what thoughts are being expressed in the Infinite Consciousness?

Neither I nor anyone else can tell you what is in God's mind, or in Cosmic Consciousness if you prefer to designate the Infinite Being in that way. But I do know that the Infinite can be revealed to you only in those images of the Infinite you are able to behold and comprehend.

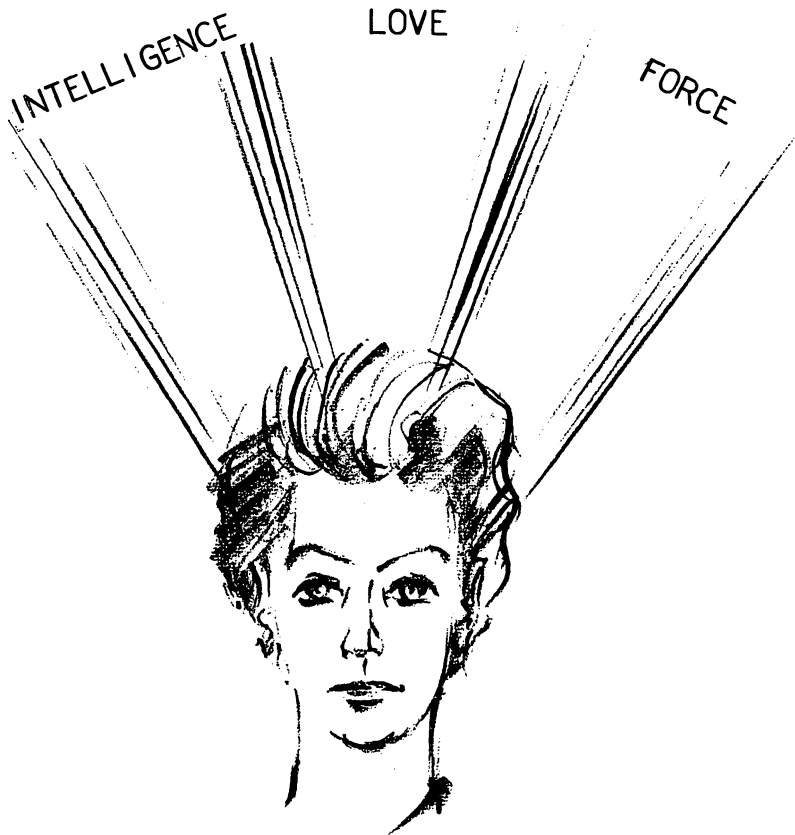
First, let us examine the concrete forms around us ...things and people. When, with your physical eye, you look upon any object in nature including man himself, you may see an expression of Infinite creativity and life but you do not see God. The Infinite is not physically visible in concrete things. That is why it is impossible for many to accept the concept of an Infinite Being. They attempt to comprehend the Infinite with finite elements.

The fact that many men fail to detect the presence and handiwork of God is their failure, not His. A chemical test in the laboratory reveals the presence of material substances but not spiritual components. If I enter your home, keep my eyes tightly closed, and fail to see you, it is the fault of my refusal to use my abilities, and in no way indicates that you are not present, or do not exist.

Now let us turn to the abstract or formless. We cannot comprehend the abstract with any physical instru-

ment, either laboratory or human. But the abstract is present nevertheless.

The Aquarian Gospel, a spiritual study of the life of Christ said to have been written from the Akashic Records, reports a meeting of ancient sages at which one said, in effect: *God is a triune Being, Father-Mother-Child. Father is Intelligence, Mother is Force, and Child is the blending of these two into Love.*



*The manifestation of the Triune Principles of Intelligence, Love and Force constitute the essence of being.*

Neither Intelligence nor Love are comprehensible by physical means, but they both exist. Of that there can be no doubt. They are recognized, known, inwardly felt, understood by a higher element of consciousness. Doesn't this make clearer what Jesus meant when he said, *"God is Spirit,"* and those who would know Him must know Him in spirit and in truth, or through the spiritual rather than the physical senses. God reveals Himself to you in whatever images you are able to behold.

Without being able to measure it, you can still comprehend the fact of a Superior Intelligence. You



can comprehend a Superior Force and a Superior Love. In whatever images or symbols these three abstract principles become understandable and comprehensible to you, you can have a relationship with God.

To offer an example, I can use my faculty of imagery to think of light as an inner symbol. *"The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord."* I can visualize a candle flame as being present in my consciousness. And I can accept the idea that this flame is endowed with the quality of Infinite Intelligence, of which I can partake to the limit of my present ability. And I can do the same with the other two aspects of Divinity... Force and Love.

In each instance, when I do this, I can inwardly "sense" an inflowing of these qualities, or at other times at least feel that I am in their Presence and their Presence is in me. Thus, I have had a productive communication with the Infinite, a relationship through my Self and its higher than normal faculties of perception. A different symbol may appeal to you, depending upon your own experience and practice. Aside from making use of some type of symbolism such as that suggested above, what other ways are there for conducting a fruitful relationship with the Infinite?

### ESTABLISH YOUR OWN ATTITUDE

You can easily imagine that during the last 30 years of discussing spiritual matters with thousands of persons I've encountered all kinds of individual attitudes about God and personal relationships with Him. I would be the last to say that any of these attitudes is incorrect.

I do believe that each different attitude represents a different level of personal evolvment in the individual's growth. I cannot believe that God closes any door against those who would know Him. But I believe that some attitudes lead to more rapid and more productive knowledge of Him than others. In general, there are three personal attitudes which individuals adopt in conducting their lives. They are:

1. I'm going to do it all myself, without help from anyone, especially any kind of Infinite Being.
2. I'm going to let God do it all. I'm completely resigned to making no de-

cisions in my life and will accept whatever happens to me as God's will.

3. I'm going to accept responsibility for my own decisions, but will attempt to make them in a spirit of cooperation with the God Presence in me.

Need I ask you to guess which attitude I prefer? The last, of course.

Minor decisions I attempt to make entirely by myself to the best of my ability in my own conscious mind.

The important decisions I attempt to make in my conscious mind after attempted attunement with my High Self.

The major decisions I attempt to make in my conscious mind after attempted attunement with the inner God Presence.

In each instance, the final responsibility is mine. I shall not blame God if I have decided incorrectly. I shall not blame God if my decision, even if correct, leads me into unpleasant situations. Jesus on the cross placed no responsibility for his pain, even his death, on God. When he said, "My God, for this was I born," he was saying, "This situation is my responsibility...I view it as the consequence of my own Self-fulfillment and I accept it."

The scope of your vision of life is another aspect of the attitude you establish. Will you see a certain situation as "the all" of your life? Or will you accept it as a single event in an eternal life? Difficult though it may be to understand, a catastrophe or tragedy, or your greatest triumph, are only events in time.

Jesus did not come only to raise Lazarus from the dead, or feed the multitude. These events were but part of a life, and but part of a fruitful relationship with the Infinite. This kind of "eternity vision" softens the rough spots you encounter and strengthens your oneness with God.

There are day by day attitudes, too, that influence your association with the Divine. "Today I shall work with God toward accomplishing such and such a material goal," might be your attitude today. Tomorrow it could be, "On this day I shall work with God toward expressing

love in my family." Or toward helping my community, or any other project to which you are dedicated. And there is another type of inner attitude which is important.

#### HOW THE HINDU MEETS GOD

Since times most ancient, it has been the custom among the Hindus to seek a Guru, or teacher, who thereafter would be a spiritual adviser. In Judaism, the word is Rabbi, sometimes translated as Lord in the Bible.

When a Hindu youth reaches the age of sixteen or eighteen his Guru gives him a personal name for Brahm, or God. The Guru selects the name only after analyzing the temperament, emotional qualities and personality of the youth. For example, an affectionate youth might be given "Beloved" as the name of God. A forceful youth might be given the name "Power."

The name selected is then used throughout a lifetime, and is kept secret even from husband or wife in later years. It is used in personal prayer and attunement. It is meant to symbolize the attitude in which the one to whom it is given meets with the Deity.

If there is an aspect of the Deity which you wish to incorporate predominately in your life, you might select the word which describes it, then use the word to "set the tone" of your inner attitude toward the Infinite. It can predominate in your prayers and affirmations, in the general atmosphere of your mind throughout the day, or as the attitude in which you approach a specific venture in life. Then there is another step in the process of "God-Self" relationship.

#### ACT WITH A SENSE OF UNITY

The purpose of the name for God given to the Hindu youth is to enable him to create in himself an atmosphere of unity with the Deity which is compatible with his own nature. This can be carried to a further degree simply by the way you act in life.

One day in Astara's offices I met Mr. Alfred A. Montapert, a very successful business man who, since retiring, is devoting his life to helping others. Mr. Montapert is the founder and president of seven large and successful corporations. He wrote the book, "Distilled Wisdom," a compilation of wisdom thoughts from

many sources, and "Success Planning Manual," a book that helps one plan for both material and spiritual attainment in life.

During our conversation Mr. Montapert said, "I started out with a tool chest and a belief in God." He was 13 years old at the time!

It struck me that while this was a simple statement describing the beginning of a most successful career, at the same time it was a profound statement about the result which comes from knowing your relationship with the Infinite. To have expanded these simple possessions -- one material, a tool chest; and the other spiritual, a belief in God -- is a lesson in living for all of us. It tells us that we do not need vast material resources to become successful in the world...providing we have sufficient spiritual resources.

I think it is safe to say that from the first day he carried that tool chest to work, Mr. Montapert carried something infinitely greater also -- a Divine-human relationship that sustained him through troublous times and which became the basis on which he built his success and his life. He was confident in his faith, and he acted with assurance. The heavy tool chest was lighter because a portion of Infinite Strength was in his arms and hands. He worked the more expertly because a portion of Infinite Intelligence was in his consciousness. His work was better received because a portion of Infinite Love was in his heart. The Father-Mother-Child type of God was present wherever he was.

Act with a sense of unity with God. That has been the admonition of every great Revealer. And it is my suggestion to you today if you truly would fulfill your Self.

Act with a sense of togetherness. Harmonize your Self with the Infinite Self. Act as though it were so, for it is so. This is the principal step in establishing your relationship with the Infinite. The more you act it, the more unifying the relationship actually becomes. Act is the first syllable of activity. Act is the first step toward actuality.

#### HOW MY MIND FUNCTIONS IN COOPERATION WITH THE GREATER MIND

Why did an all-wise Creator choose to put man in matter, to clothe energy in material substance? Was it



merely a capricious experiment?

It is obvious that earth and the realm of matter -- the complete sidereal kingdom -- came into being without help from the human mind in any way. Nor does it continue to exist because of the human mind. This fact is obvious since this little ball of earth -- transitory as it is -- came into existence before man appeared upon it and has continued to exist while waves of life have come and gone. Therefore its very existence witnesses the presence of a greater Mind over and above the consciousness of humanity...a Mind which not only created the earth but holds it in orbit in the vastness of space among hundreds of thousands and perhaps millions of similar earths.

But to arrive at this conclusion does not answer the question. Why did the great Creator choose to clothe His energy realms in matter, placing limitations upon His own creation?

Part of the mission of incarnation is for man to develop his own powers of creativity. Each created being had to appear as being individualized (it is only an apparent individualization), operating under his own individual power and imaginary separateness from other creatures. To bring about this manifestation it became necessary for spirit to project itself to its ultimate density -- the density of matter.

Thus, so the individual might gain his individual creative power, it became necessary to "clothe" him in skin, or cause him to descend into realms of matter, that by expressing his individuality therein he might develop his own creative potential.

The descent of pure spirit into matter, then, became inevitable. From the plane of spirit came the projection of mind, and from mind came the projection of life, and from life came the projection of matter -- solidified and crystallized spirit -- that man might use it toward his own creative development. To accuse Eve -- the divine feminine principle in man -- of bringing a curse to humanity when, through her activities, she caused humanity to fall from its etheric state into the forms of matter, is to mock the Divine Plan of the Creator who had earth prepared and waiting for man's descent to it.

The individual mind, feeling itself to be separate and apart from others, gains a great share of its creative potential and powers before returning to the re-

alization that it is a part of the whole of humanity, and the whole of humanity is involved in the heart of God.

This is not to say that man, when he transmutes his "coat of skin" into the immortal form of spirit, will cease to be an individual. For such is the doctrine of annihilation and man, as an individual being, can never be annihilated.

However, he does discover something that replaces his feeling of separateness. It is his sense of unity or oneness with other persons and with the Infinite.

This sense of at-one-ment is activated through inner disciplines such as meditation, prayer, yoga, spiritual studies of mystical nature and hence of divinely associative impetus to the mind, contemplation upon "The Mysteries" and other similar activities.

Association of your mind with the Infinite Mind, regardless of the method you use to accomplish it, is the activity of consciously controlling and calming your mind and directing it to "receive" the Divine Impulses which permeate life's mental atmosphere.

Man is not destined for annihilation; his destiny is godhood. In attaining this superior spiritual state he becomes a great light. And in becoming a great light he becomes infused with the great Creator Himself.

But is such a state too far removed from your present circumstances to be of practical use to you today? Consider this:

You need not...in fact while on earth you probably cannot...center your attention solely upon spiritual matters. The demands of physical and material life prohibit it. But you can engage in regular periods of reflection and meditation or other spiritual disciplines for which you have a personal affinity. For instance, in moments of quiet reflection, you can say to yourself, "My mind is permeated with Infinite Mind. From It I receive guidance in my affairs. It gives meaning and purpose to my life."

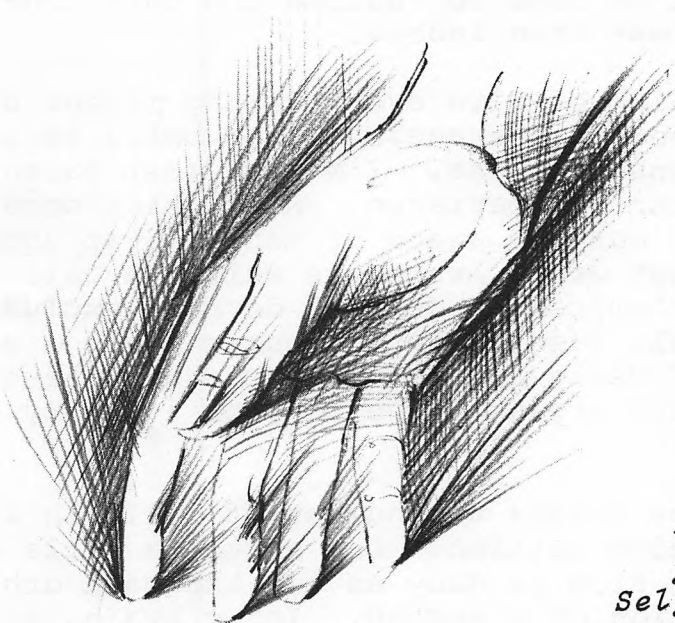
Expressing ideas similar to this in your consciousness serves to incorporate spiritual propulsion in, and momentum to, even your most material endeavors. Your mind begins to function cooperatively with Divine Mind and you experience a considerably broadened dimension

of thought and being. A degree of the clarity and perceptiveness of the Infinite Mind is expressed in your mind.

And remember this, just as there is a reaching upward toward the Deity from within your Self, there is also a reaching downward from the Deity toward you.

#### GOD SEARCHES FOR MAN

At the time this lesson is being written, the Dodge automobile company is conducting a national ad-



*Just as  
there is a  
reaching upward  
toward the Deity  
from within your  
Self, there is also  
a reaching downward  
from the Deity  
toward you.*



vertising campaign on television in which a young lady says, "The Dodge rebellion wants you." We recognize this as a purely commercial advertising gambit. Can the principle of this implied personal relationship between a huge corporation and a potential customer be applied to the relation between God and you?

Many people ask, "How could an Infinite God be concerned about, or even aware of, minute man?" To answer, I must illustrate with a personal experience.

On the day our daughter Sita was born a friend said to me, "You will never be free again." At the time I didn't know just what she meant, but with the passing years, I've come to realize the full import of her words. She was wise indeed.

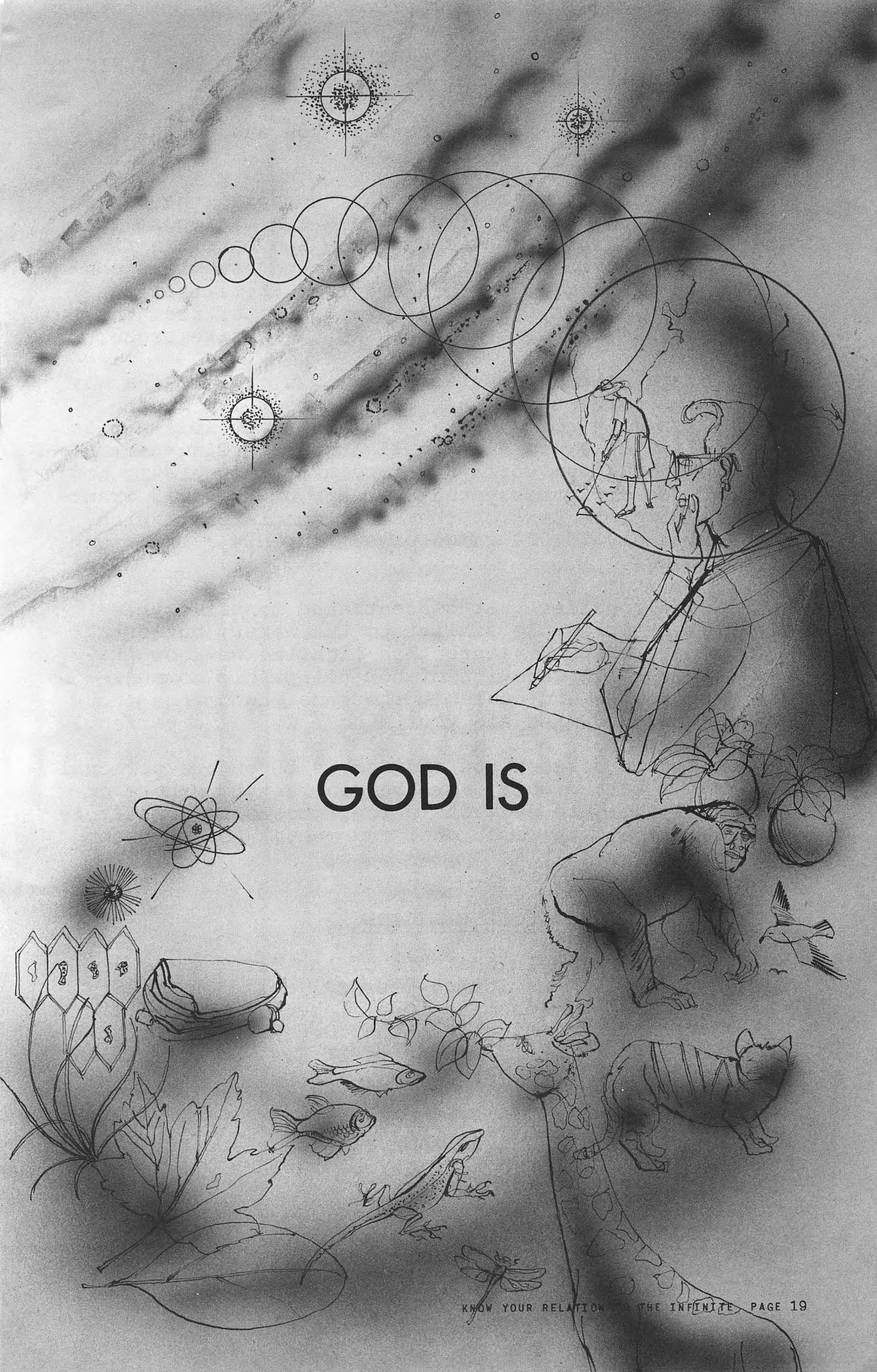
I do not think of Sita every waking moment of my life. But somehow an awareness of her being is always present in my consciousness. I'm sure most parents have this same inner experience. And I have come to believe that God must be aware of man in just about the same way. In that Great Awareness which we call God there exists an "awareness center" devoted exclusively to one individual, just as in the human brain a single cell or group of cells may serve as the awareness center for a specific organ of the body or a memory of a past experience.

One estimate places the number of cells in the human brain at twelve billion. One of these cells may receive impulses from as many as ten thousand other cells in a fraction of a second. In my brain, a few of these cells are reserved as the physical terminal for my conscious awareness of Sita. Somewhere in Cosmic Consciousness there exists a similar awareness center that is reserved specially for you.

I truly believe that God searches for man to an even greater degree than man searches for God. It is my belief that He does so through the awareness center in the Infinite Consciousness, just as I am always "searching" for Sita through the awareness center in my consciousness that is reserved specifically for her. At times she responds to that awareness center, and at other times the connection isn't active. And so it is in your relation to the Infinite.

At times you activate the center in your consciousness that is in harmony with the center in the God Consciousness. When this is done, you and God are functioning harmoniously, almost as a single being. But





GOD IS

how does any communication between you and God take place?

Esotericists of all ages have accepted the concept of the Macrocosm (the Infinite) and the microcosm (man). God is the infinite Cosmic Universe and man is a finite segment of the Cosmic Universe. Man nevertheless contains, in miniature, every element of the larger of which he is a part, just as a drop of water from the sea possesses the same elements as the entire ocean.

Modern science provides us with a clue to the way God communicates with man. One of its tools is the laser, a highly concentrated beam of light as small as a pinpoint. The use of this light for sending communications around the world and to distant planets is now common. Scientists say that a laser burst could transmit the complete text of the Encyclopedia Britannica (approximately 23,000 large pages) in only a fraction of a second!

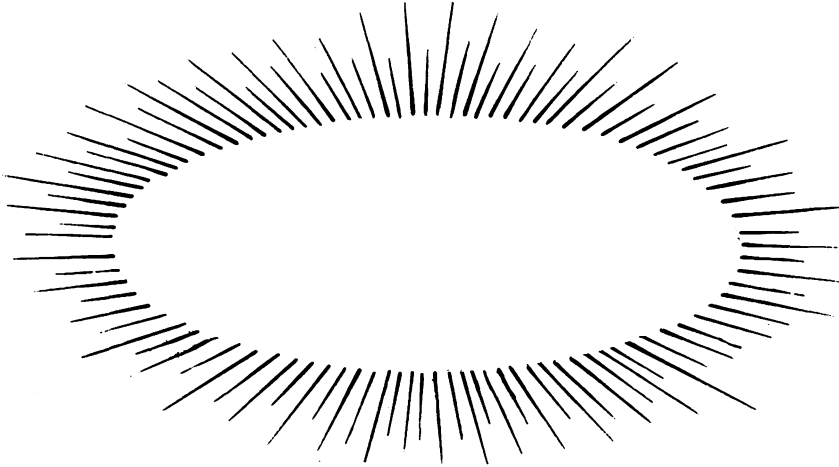
If we consider that concentrated mental expressions use a principle similar to the laser, but of a different vibratory nature than light as we know it, isn't this an explanation of how telepathic communications occur? And couldn't the same phenomenon occur between the God-mind and your mind? It seems perfectly plausible to me. And the way to improve the line of communication between you and God is through a personal attunement to the Deity, or the general atmosphere of spiritual thoughts and acts which, together, constitute your religion...the emotional and mental bond between you and God.

#### FORMULATE YOUR PERSONAL RELIGION

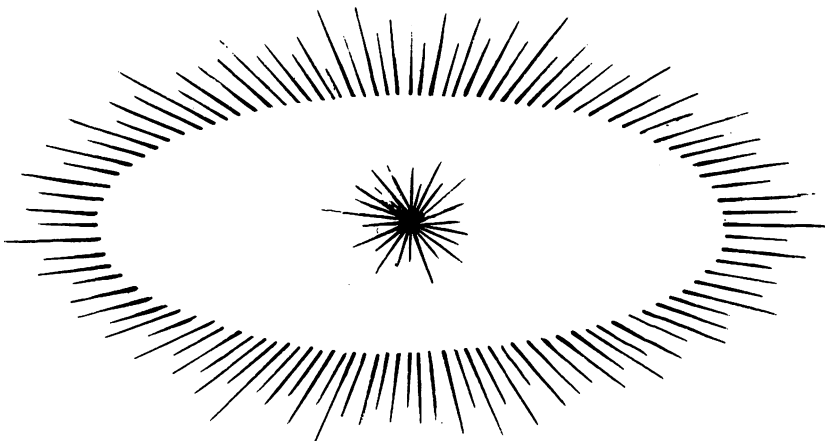
I have long held that one of the first steps toward a properly functioning personal religion is to rid one's self of denominational labels. Just as the Deity becomes something less than God when we name, define and describe Him, and so limit Him, so does religion become limited by the same process.

Among Astarians we find Christians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists and followers of many another religion, plus all the denominations in each. If you were to question two followers of the same religion, or even two members of the same religious denomination, you would discover wide variations in belief. I have attempted to formulate the basics to which you may wish to add your own ideas, basics which I believe go be-

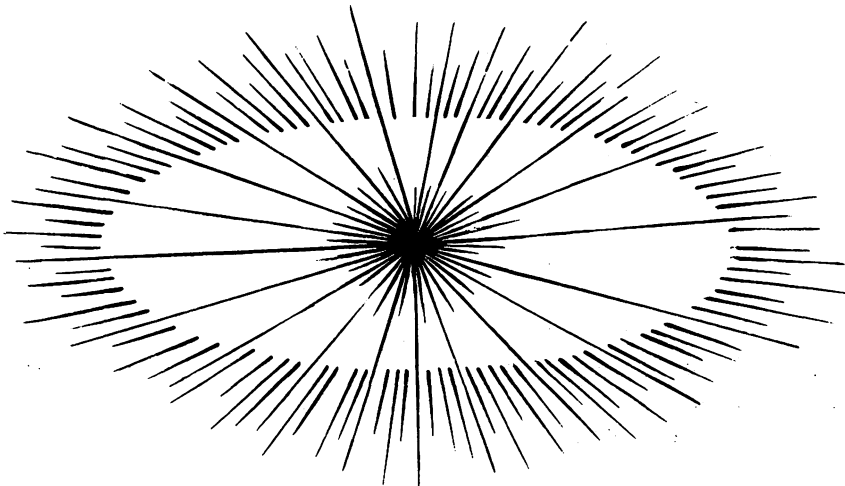
yond the limitations which creed and dogma are bound to create. The simplest basics of religion, which you may wish to adopt as your own personal religion, are:



1. Belief in the Infinite, or God;



2. Belief that you are in the Infinite and the Infinite is in you;



3. Belief that you live a greater life when the Infinite Life is included in your finite life.

The acceptance of these three principles actually constitute a personal religion, no matter what name is given it. And the practice of religion is simply the changing of these beliefs to personal knowledge through experience, and the magnification of knowledge toward greater powers of personal expression.

Some churches and synagogues have bell towers from which the sounds of chimes peal forth throughout the area in which they are located. In many instances these chimes are but tiny bells, no larger than a thimble, which are electronically amplified to sound as though they were huge bells weighing hundreds of pounds. Similarly your acceptance of these three basic religious principles becomes amplified in your life expression till your area of personal influence is tremendously expanded into great powers of personal expression. But even though this is true, even though you find God and are functioning harmoniously with that portion of God Consciousness which is His awareness center of you, we must return to the prime objective of our lessons, your Self.

#### THE SELF IS YOUR ULTIMATE CONCERN

Among the many hungers known to man are the hungers for food and drink, for love, for meaning in life, for sex, for achievement of goals, for Self-fulfillment. When any of these hungers are denied, trouble in the form of illness, frustration, mental and emotional disturbances, enters one's life.

Modern psychiatry is coming more and more to the realization that one of the long neglected hungers, and possibly chief among them, is the hunger to know God, to become familiar with one's Creator, to achieve a spiritual oneness with the Infinite. In fact, this may be the basis of all other hungers...they may only be personal variations of the one great longing in the heart of man.

Hunger in any form is the most personal and intimate of all human feelings. It is the desire of the deep Self brought to the surface of life. How is spiritual hunger satisfied?

In the Gospel of Thomas, Jesus is reported to have said, *Whoever knows the All but fails (to know) himself lacks everything.*



There is a tremendous misapprehension abroad that the kingdom of God can be built by forms of government, social security programs, the science of electronics and a thousand other agencies except the one and only one which can really do it -- YOU. In the final analysis, *Self-consciousness leads to God-Consciousness.*

We sometimes feel called upon to report to God on the nature of our circumstances in order to call His attention to them. Yet we are told that God is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent, that He is everywhere, knows all, and is all powerful. Meditating about this one day I wrote the following in my notebook:

*If God is omnipresent, He is with me,  
So I needn't speak loudly for Him to hear.*

*If God is omniscient, He knows all,  
So I need not tell Him anything.*

*If God is omnipotent, He is all-powerful,  
And I cannot add to that power.*

*As part of the Great One, I need only to  
Live in the consciousness of that One.*

So it is far more important for me to gain information about what I am than to try to tell God what I think He is...to learn what I can do rather than tell God what He should do. I must live with both God-consciousness and Self-consciousness till they are one and the same. In this way I satisfy the Supreme Hunger which leads me to my personal relationship with the Infinite.

I believe you will improve your relationship with the Infinite if occasionally you will sit quietly for a few moments and say:

*God is here, in this room, now --*

*God is in my mind --*

*God is in my affairs --*

*I can feel His Presence in the sense of  
serenity that is now in my consciousness --*

*I can feel His Presence in the sense of  
strength that is present in my body --*

*I can feel His Presence in the sense of  
assurance that is present in my mind --*

*God is in me --*

*And I am in Him --*

CONCLUSION

I can bring this lesson to a conclusion in no better way than to repeat what was said in it earlier about the three principles of mysticism:

1. I must have my own mystical experiences or revelations;
2. I must constantly pave the way for them to occur;
3. I must have an over-all realization that my Self is part of the Greater Self.

And with these ideas as the basic atmosphere of our lives we are ready to proceed to details concerning the six mystical laws and how to use them...the laws of correspondence, cycles, cause and effect, rest, organization and love. They are the laws by which you bring Self-fulfillment to successful culmination in your life.

In Step 5, *Unite the Two Worlds*, we study the first of the six mystical laws, *The Law of Correspondence*, and learn how to apply it in our lives.

